

*In 1741*  
A  
DISCOURSE  
CONCERNING THE  
GREAT BENEFIT OF

Drayning and imbanking, and  
of transportation by water  
within the Country.

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Presented to the High Court of Parliament by J. L.

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Printed by G. M. 1641.

1871

# DISCOGRAPH

THE

OF THE



1871

Printed by



Dread Sovereign, and right Honourable Lords and Commons :



He great and many favours this Kingdome hath formerly shewne to the Netherlands, (who by the marvellous blessing of God, and its assistance, have attained to that great wealth and prosperity, which they now enjoy) makes me (a member thereof) to stand partly ingaged for them to this Kingdom;

and in thankfullnesse to render my hearty prayers, and best endeavours for it, that it may flourish in peace, true Religion and plenty: But seeing that either through some unworthy members their negligence, ignorance or wilfull injuries, it hath of late suffered a great decay of its wonted Trade, and (in that) of its wealth, and knowing by my long practise and experience that the drayning and imbanking of surrounded lands, (they being in themselves most fertile) is so good, so great, so speedy a way, for advancement of Trade, prevention of all further future

ture, and repairing of the already past decay, as can be prescribed, I presumed to present this little Pamphlet, concerning drayning and imbanking to you; which, though (by reason of my unexpernesse in this language) you shall finde in a Style unworthy the matter, (much more Your view) be pleased to accept, reade, and duely consider for the matters sake; as also for that it commeth from one, who neither out of applause or reward, but only in demonstration of his great gratitude, humble duty, servent Zeale, and entire affection to this King and State, hath presented it to you. So praying to God to prosper all your labours with a happy issue, I rest

Your most humble

and truly devoted

Servant

J.L.



## Of Drayning.



**T**H E good of Drayning, in that it cleareth and maketh wholefome the aire, bettereth the ground, and maketh it freer from that corrupt moyſture which rotteth cattle, is evident to all; therefore, ſithence whatſoever might be ſpoken to that effect would be needleſſe; I will paſſe by it, and acquaint you with greater benefits, either going along with, or neceſſarily following, this undertaking; and which, (by obſervation of other Countries, and part of this, I may juſtly collect,) may be reaped by this whole Kingdome from hence: which, when demonſtrated, (as I doubt not to doe) I perſwade me all well-willers to the Common-wealth, will runne into a ſpeedy proſecution of it.

Fiſt then, (imitating a ſkilfull Phyſitian who fiſt maketh a diligent ſcrutinie into the cauſe, and malignant qualities of a diſeaſe, ere he meddle with the cure) I will ſhew you the great defects and maladies the body of this Kingdome long hath, and ſtill doth, labour with; next, how they may be repaired and cured by this worke of well drayning and imbanking ſurrounded lands. Laſtly, I will answer the Objections which are ordinarily made by the oppoſers of this ſo laudable and profitable a worke.

*Concerning the Defects or grievances.*

It costs this Kingdome, for oile, for soape, for flaxe, for hempe, for fine linnen cloth, for thread, for yarne, for roapes, for saile-clothes, for madder, and such like, many hundred thousand pounds a yeare; as all Merchants know, and some will confesse: and some yeares, it suffereth in buying a great quantity of corne; as for example, *Boston* (a little Towne in *Lincolne-shiire*) three yeares since, in fixe moneths imported about thirty thousand pounds worth of corne, as some Merchants, of that place, informed me, and by the great quantities, I might conjecture: besides the bringing in of Cheese, &c. All which exceedingly impoverish this Kingdome by the losse of their moneys in the very buying, and also at a deare rate, and hinder the manufactures; and by these meanes daily increase the number of idle and poore people. These crying defects and grievances I will not more largely insist on, because others in late Treatises have already sufficiently declared them.

*The remedies of these grievances.*

Here I will, for the more plaine and easie demonstration of the benefits, give you the number of some Levells, which have fallen within my knowledge; and, according to the computation of the benefit to be made out of them, you may collect what may arise out of all other draynings within and throughout this Kingdome.

The Levell formerly the Lord of *Bedfords* (now his Majesties) is esteemed to be 40000. acres.

The Fennes neare *Lincolne* with the surrounded severalls of the Earle of *Lindsays* drayning and 800 Fennes, which his Majesty hath undertaken are 106600. acres.

Sir *Anthony Thomas* his drayning with the severalls are about 45000. acres.

The Levell at *Hatfield* Chace with the adjacent Commons and severalls are about 65000. acres.

The Drayning of *Encolne* 19600. acres.

*Pottery*

*Pottery Carr* neare *Doncaster* 4000. acres.

Surrounded grounds neare *Beverly* about 20000. acres.

Out of these lands onely being about 667200. acres,  
the benefit may arise as followeth.

120000. acres sowne with Cole and Rape-seed, may well, and ordinarily doth yeeld 40000 last of seed, which is but one last on three acres; and 11 quarters of seede will make one tunne of oyle; but I will take 12 quarters and esteeme it worth but 25<sup>lb</sup>. the tunne (though it is sold at this time for 27<sup>lb</sup>. the tunne) amounts at 25<sup>lb</sup>. the tunne yearly to 83333<sup>lb</sup>. 6<sup>s</sup> 8<sup>d</sup>.

This oyle is such as is used commonly in spinning for the making of wollen-cloth, and by tanners, and for many other uses: and if it be made into soape, it will make very sweete and good; and no other is suffered to be sold in other Kingdomes and Countries. For soape made of traine oyles, grease, and such other noisome stuffe, is prohibited, as being a cause of diseases, and left for the use of Tanners, &c.

And this making of oyle into soape is a great benefit, besides the making of the oyle it selfe; which profit of making oyle appeares by the many mills that are erected in this Kingdome since the Drayning of the Levell of *Harfield* Chace, and the imbanking of *Convey* Island, and *Fobbing* Marsh, and others; as also in that Forreigners fetch, and others from hence doe send in to forreigne parts, many thousand last of seed in a yeare, which they make into oyle and bring backe againe; they paying 10. or 12. pound a last for seed, and receiving of us for the oyle when it is returned 24. or 26<sup>lb</sup> the tunne.

60000. acres sowne yearly with flaxe; the increase of every acre, will be worth when it is dressed about 15<sup>lb</sup>. (though at 15<sup>lb</sup>. the acre, it there hath beene 27<sup>lb</sup>. made of one acre) in *Harfield* Chace commeth to 900000<sup>lb</sup>. yearly.

Besides, great profit may be made, and much expence saved, by making of linnen cloth in this Kingdome. Here by the way it is to be considered, that this Kingdome paies yearly (as I am informed) more for *Holland* linnen only, then it receiveth  
for



for all the Woollen cloth sent out from hence into forreigne parts.

60000. acres of Hempe taking 3. acres for one of flaxe (dressed) I esteeme at  $5^{\text{lb}}-13^{\text{s}}-4^{\text{d}}$ . the acre (though a good acre of hemp may be worth  $15^{\text{lb}}$ ) and at the rate of  $5^{\text{lb}}-13^{\text{s}}-4^{\text{d}}$ . the acre, it comes to  $340000^{\text{lb}}$  yearly.

Besides, the benefit of it made into linnen saile-clothes, and roapes, which will be of great value.

10000 acres of Woad (this ground being very fit for it) will yeeld  $20^{\text{b}}$ . an acre, and at that rate it commeth to  $200000^{\text{lb}}$ . yearly.

5000. acres of Madder, every acre yeelding 20 hundred weight, or thereabouts; but I will account but 1000 weight, and at  $3^{\text{lb}}10^{\text{s}}$ . the hundred weight (though for these seven yeares it hath beene sold for  $4^{\text{lb}}$ . the hundred) commeth to  $175000^{\text{b}}$ . yearly: and there is now paid yearly for this commodity here, comming out of *Silesia* or the Low Countries about  $100000^{\text{b}}$ .

100000 acres sowne with wheate, ry, and barley, will be worth about  $3^{\text{lb}}$ . an acre, (dressed fit for sale) which commeth to  $300000^{\text{lb}}$ . yearly.

100000 acres sowne with oates, pease, and beanes I accompt will yeeld  $2^{\text{lb}}$ . an acre (dressed) though oftentimes in *Hatfield* Levell  $5^{\text{lb}}$ . hath beene made of one acre of oates, at  $2^{\text{lb}}$ . the acre it commeth to  $200000^{\text{lb}}$ . yearly.

1000 acres of onions will, when ready for sale or transportation, be worth  $15000^{\text{lb}}$ .

207000 acres in Meadow and pasture, to keepe cowes to make butter and cheefe, for feeding and breeding of cattle, horse, and sheepe will be worth  $500000^{\text{lb}}$  yearly with the charges comprehended.

4000 acres remaine for building of Houses, for Gardens, Orchards, Nurseries for trees, for sowing of Carrets, Turneps, Annis, Coriander, and Nardis feedes, and such like which cannot be valued.

Here you may see what great good, to the King and Kingdome in having these commodities cheape, and of their owne, in the imployment of the poore people, and in many other respects



respects, would arise, for the then present, and more for the future out of 667200 acres.

Many other Levells, surrounded, and wast grounds there are (unknowne to me) which may be thus employed and yeeld no lesse profit.

But these lands nor other in the like kind surrounded cannot produce the forementioned profit, unlesse it be contrived that every 200 acres, or lesse, be made passable by land and by boates for them that will live there, and for the transporting of their commodities Winter and Summer. And that in the great Levell (called the Lord of *Bedfords* Levell) order be given to the director of the works, new draynes, and rivers, that he lay and contrive them for transportation by water every where, so farre as the limits thereof do extend. And in like manner from thence (being the river of *Glenn* or *Deeping* Fenn) that it be continued towards *Lincolne*; and ordered to be made sufficient for transportation; for the charges of this, I will (being required) set downe a way without any particular prejudice; which, besides the perfecting of these works, will yield some thousand pounds *per annum* to the King. And that further the transportation be made perfect from *Lincolne* into *Trent*, that boates may passe at all times in Summer as they have already in some Winters: all these works, their sluices, sasses, verlaets, and overtyes, contrived and ordered as they are in *Holland* in the Low Countries; and if this be done, passage will be by water within the Countrey from *Torke*, and 20 miles higher, to *Cambridge*; and out of these Levells aforesaid into 12.\* adjacent Counties: and likewise passage for crossing these Counties almost every where from Towne to Towne. What great benefit the City of *London*, and all other Cities, Townes and Counties, (neare adjoyning to these 12. Counties) may reape by this, I leave to men of judgement to conceive, and what great inriching this will be to the other parts of this Kingdome in advancing of trade, I should in more particular manner have handled, if *Lewis Roberts* Merchant, in his late Treatise, intituled *The Treasure of traffique*, had not declared it

\**York-shire.*  
*Darby.*  
*Nottingham.*  
*Lincolne.*  
*Northampton.*  
*Huntington.*  
*Rutland.*  
*Bedford.*  
*Buckingham.*  
*Cambridge.*  
*Norfolk.*  
*Suffolke.*

*Now concerning the Objections.*

But first, give me leave to speake a word or two, concerning the opposers of that which hath already beene done in this businesse: to whom (if duely considered) no answer, to what they can say, need be given; sithence most of them are either such, who themselves formerly, by entreaties, and otherwise, have laboured to have shares in the Drayning, and not obtaining their desires, now seeke the ruine of those who are the undertakers; or such, who, having by right no common, and living many miles off, by indirect meanes procure feeding for their cattle (to the great prejudice of the poore ignorant commoner) or such who confesse themselves to have no right in the Fennes; yet because their Land-lord, some great man amongst them, or other friend, is interested, doe, without the least thought of either private or publique good, or ill, leane to, and take part in, the quarrell, meerely because his; and speake, write, or may sweare too, by his direction; which one not so well ready in his lesson as the rest, did display in his contradicting answers upon examination not long since before the Committee for this businesse; or such, who, having according to Law beene punished for their outrages, and riots, seek a malicious revenge against the undertakers to whom they have done injury; or (lastly) such, who maintaine and prosecute the rude and ignorant peoples begun malice, onely out of a popular ambition.

The consideration of these mens private and unworthy ends, in resisting so generally beneficiall a work, makes an answer superfluous; but, for the satisfaction of those few, who are reasonable (willing to keepe what they are yet perswaded is their due inheritance, and (as they thinke) in as firme and good a condition as it hath beene ever, or may be made; and yet as willing to part with it upon certaine improvement of it, and the common good) for these mens satisfaction (I say) I will answer the Objections severally which are made.

*Objection 1.*

*Obiection. 1.* That Drayning destroyeth fish and foule.

*I answer.* That there will be as many fish (as formerly) in old and new rivers and draynes, if sluices are made to purpose as they ought to be : but suppose I should admit a totall destruction of wild foule, (though there will be some doubtlesse after Drayning the rape and Cole being a shelter for them when they breed) instead of wild, there will be an extraordinary encrease of all kinds of tame foule in every yard; and Hares, Partridge, and such other things (unknowne to the place before) will breed there, which are causes both of delight and profit.

*Obiection 2.* That though the profit would be great, if the grounds were well drayned, manured, and ordered as they should be, we want able and skilfull men to doe it, our selves being ignorant therein.

*I answer.* That the division of the lands aforesaid, and transportation made, and all other things (as I before shewed) prepared, and liberty of religion (as in Queene Elizabeths time) unto strangers given, the priviledge (among other) of purchasing and possessing lands gained by drayning and imbanking, as also of transporting of all kindes of corne, and other commodities growing upon these lands, granted, paying customes as natives, the Low-Country-men will soone come over; and buy, and hire these lands at a dearer rate by halfe then any native; nor is that all, here the profit beginnes rather then ends; (though that be a matter considerable) the knowledge of making of all sorts of linnen cloth, thread, sweet and good, oile, and soape, fishing (which this Kingdome hath so long endeavoured) and all other trades (in which they excell) would soone be gained; and no doubt in short time, the natives of these parts (being very apprehensive of any thing they either see done or are instructed in) would become better artists then their instructors. By these meanes his Majesty for his share might have out of the great Levell onely (if well drayned and most part of it made fit for winter corne) one hundred thousand pounds a yeare; and if matters are well ordered, much more in few yeares.

*Objection 3.* That though these Lands may be drayned, and profit be made, yet not to the commoner; or if so, yet not so great as to the undertaker; he having too large a proportion being about a third part.

To the first part of this objection I answer; that in the drayning of the Earle of *Lindsey* (called the great fens of *Lincolne*) it is manifest that the remainder generally of the commons there (belonging to the country) do keep many more horses and cattle, then they did before the drayning; besides sheep, which could not well feed there before; and that cattle do prosper better and are more sound; and if this improovement so soon, as in two years, be made, before the waterish and ill nature of the grass be changed (which, by experience we find will turne all, or most part, into good sweet grasse, clover and hony-suckles, as it is in the levell of *Hatfield-chace* neare the Town of *Thorne*, *Fish-lake*, *Syke house*, *Ratcliffe*, *Croale*, *Stockwith*, and others) how great must the improovement needs be for the future? I dare say, one acre will be shortly so profitable for feeding of cattle, horse and sheep, as two are at this present, and will still mend and improove for a long time.

To the latter part of the Objection I answer, as others have done to the like Objection; that this onely betrayes their ignorance or malice; who, like the dogg in the manger, will neither disburse monies, and be gainers themselves, nor suffer others; but when others have with great hazard and paines expended vast summes of monies, and obtained a good successe, then (when too late and contrary to all reason and equity) they would have shares; pretending that they would have drayned themselves; or els clamouring against the undertakers, as if they had too great proportions, by their illegitimate vexations, in breaking downe banks, filling up draynes, destroying the works, and turning whole heardes of cattle into the undertakers grounds to spoyle their cropps (which hath undone many sufficient men) they endeavour to make void that drayning which hath, with great charge, bin begun, and dis-hearten

others

others to undertake the like for the future: when as in the 29<sup>th</sup>. of *Eliz.* There was a Statute made for the encouragement of the undertakers of *Erith, Lifnes,* and *Plumstead*, that they should have the moiety of all such gained Lands, and an eighth part of such other moiety, and hold it of the Queen, as of the manour of *Greene-wich*, in soccage by fealty, paying a penny an acre yearly, and no tithe for seven yeares. In my opinion this proportion, in the Statute, is so little as may be, (or rather too little) for the well and sufficient making of the Draynes, High-ways, Bridges and all other works, as before is expressed, and maintaining them, when they are made, and keeping the country in safety, that there be neither too much water in winter, nor too little in Summer; therefore I would advise a larger proportion should be granted for the future; if the Commoners refuse or neglect to drayne themselves; least to the great dishonour and disprofit of this Commonwealth, the fees should not be recovered and drayned, or if they should, least that they should fall to decay by want of means, sufficient for the maintenance of the same.

4. *Obiect.* That the undertakers have generally chosen the best Lands, and do drayn their owne shares well, but doe rather drown then drayn the Commoners part; by raising banks on their owne side and not on the Commoners, and if both are drayned, then the neighbouring countries by their means suffer an inundation?

I answer; That in some levels, the Commoners have chosen where their Lands should lye; as the Isle of *Exholme*; and some have otherwise agreed; as *Hatfield, Thorne,* &c. But where they have not chosen, nor any agreement was made, commissioners of Sewers (indifferent men) have with great care, provided, that, in the division of these Lands, the Towns should have such as lay nearest to them, being known to be the best and most convenient for them.

Secondly, In all the wor'es within my knowledge, there were proportionably as many sluices (and those with as good order) set, for the Commoners as the undertakers:

that there were rivers cut between them, and no banks made on either side, or where there were, they were made of equall height and thicknesse: but where there were no banks made on the Commoners side, as about *Briggend*, *Heipringham*, and other parts of *Kesteven*, it was done out of a provident care of the countries good: for, the high country (neare adjoyning) being all corne-lands, and wanting pasture and meadow, it was held fit for their greater advantage, to make a sufficient river for the venting of their waters; but to raise no banke there, and leave it to pasture and meadow; which, wanting over-flowing some part of the winter, would not be so fertile; and it is observed by skillfull husbandmen, that inundations caused by waters descending from clay-hills, or grounds (as these are) if soone gone, do the most improove meadow and pasture. Besides it was done to satisfie the desire of some poore commoners; who (having no maintenance but what they can get by keeping a Cow or two) craved, that the fens might not altogether be freed from high winter-floods, least then the richer sort should with their great flocks of sheep, eat the ground so bare, that the poore peoples cattle could have no feeding. By this I have shovne the reason of not making a banke for them; now I will shew why there was a banke made for the drayners and the fens on the other side of the river.

Because they could els have received little or no profit: for the adventurers and commoners parts there, lying so farre from Townes and houses (and having not the benefit of any hills) they must of necessity build some there; and sow Corn and other things there for their use, which all men know, require grounds that are very dry, and which may at all times remain so: from hence it appears that the undertakers neither intended nor did, by these meanes any thing prejudiciall to the country; so that if there hath any ill happened, it hath bin through the peoples willfull error, ignorance or negligence; whose minds wanting providence are alwayes backward and indisposed to any new thing be it never so good. Again, so ungratefull  
for

for the most part they are, that if any great good hath bin freely and often done and throwne on them, they soon forget it, and muster up all the small and trifling injuries though unwillingly, happening: imputing oftentimes the causes of their losses and injuries to others, when themselves are onely guilty of them: For, now in many places in *Lincolne-shire*, and *York-shire*, the works are made very perfect; and would, at all seasons of the yeare, keep the whole Country dry, did not the inhabitants cut the bankes, damme up, or with cattle tread downe, the new draynes, or neglect the scowring and deepning of their old, and repairing of their water-courres (which they ought to doe,) and yet, notwithstanding these their unruly actions and neglects, they condemne the undertakers as though they had done them injury, and their neighbours also: when as (to instance in *Harfield Levell*) *Marsh-land* and other Countries (being of as great a compasse as the said Levell) were alwaies formerly endangered, and oftentimes suffred, by such inundations, that the force thereof took away severall houses and barnes, now no waters come at all to trouble them; and where the waters about their bankes stood 6. or 8. foot deepe, it now in the same places and at the same time is 5. 6. or 7. foot within soyle; as it is to be seene neare *Crole Causeway*.

Their clamours have been very farre spread throughout the Kingdome, and have obtained with some the credit of truths; but if all are like this and some other which I have heard, (but for brevity sake omitted) I dare pronounce them otherwise.

Their ingratitude is every where as evident, as these their untruths; for example; the Lord of *Lindsey*, Sir *William Killigrew*, and other participants have raised in their Levell two high-waies in the length where there was none before; and tenn high-waies in the breadth where there was but one, and many bridges to that purpose amounting to the summe of about twelve thousand pounds; expended meereley for the good of the Countrey; which they were not bound to make; and have not received any recompence either in money or land; and yet the *Commoners* clamour against these men, as if they had sustained great wrongs by them in  
this



this work of drayning. Some in the like kind (as I conceive, undeservedly) have suffered in *Hatfield Levell*; the adventures whereof laid out 40 thousand pounds, at the least for making new rivers and bankes for the safety of *Fisblake* and *Sykehouse* (being but neighbours, lying on the other side of the river of *Dunn*, and knowne by their denominations to be set on overflowne lands) so that of the grounds, which were before the drayning worth to be sold, but 3; or 4. pounds the acre, there is so great improvement, that they are now worth tenne or twelve pounds the acre; and yet, though this improvement hath been made, and twice so much moneys, as the whole lands and houses of both the Lordships were worth, hath been bestowed in making of rivers and bankes for their particular onely, they yet I say laboured to put them to farther charge; and have prevailed so farre, that whereas the inhabitants of those Townes, alwaies heretofore maintained banks for their own safety, the undertakers now are forced, (to their unsufferable charge,) to mend and maintaine them.

These particulars I thought good to produce, to make more evident the generall good of drayning in this respect also, both to the Commoners and neighbours; and the unworthy reward, the undertakers have too really received, for their great expence and labour for the publique, more then private, good.

*Obiect. 5.* That these grounds will not beare the said commodities, or if it should, they will not yeeld the forementioned profit, there being no proportionable store of buyers.

*I answer.* That nothing but experience can make us certainly know the true and proper quality of the grounds; yet, if we compare all surrounded lands one with another, we shall find very little or no difference: and by experience we finde that *Hatfield* and the adjacent severalls are very fruitfull for any kind of corne, flaxe, and cole-seed; as likewise the Lord of *Lindseys* drayning; where there was barley, wheat, beanes and oates sowne and proved extraordinary good; and before the banks were cut by the Countrey, and the grounds by that meanes drowned, there were as hopefull crops of cole & rape-seed as could be in any ground, and notwithstanding these their uncivill actions, of those small pieces of dry ground remaining, there

there was gotten so much cole-seed as would make 12000 pounds worth of oile; and in *Sutton* Marsh is some Madder planted, which, as I beleeeve, will yield no lesse then 50 or threescore pounds an acre: And in *Elcone* drayning there is Cole-seed now growing (belonging to M. *William Anderson*) which will, in all probability, yield no lesse then 6 or 7 quarters of seed on one acre. Out of these and many other particulars, which I could mention, there may justly be collected a generall fruitfullnesse of all the surrounded lands in the Kingdome.

And if it be true, (as I doubt not but, the event will prove it) that the well drayning of surrounded grounds, and the transportation by water (well made and observed as aforesaid) will make these lands a rich and plentiful mine, it were ridiculous to say, (much more to thinke or feare) that, where good commodities and wares are to be had, and with ease, and small charge, transported, buyers will be wanting to bring in plenty of moneys and take of these commodities from their hands, there being great profit and gaine to be made by them, if customes are, at the first, but reasonably imposed.

*Obiection 6.* That though all this be undoubtedly true which hath been alleadged; yet why should these Fennes be drayned without the inhabitants willing consent, and part taken away, being their proper inheritance and freehold?

*Answer.* First, that it is but an imaginary inheritance; for, lying under water so continually, they enjoy none or very little part of it; and that they doe enjoy (as hath, by many of the natives been confessed) bringeth much losse and certaine dammage; their cattle, once at the least every three yeares, dying of the rot: but admit it were a certaine inheritance, it is not taken away by drayning; for though the quantity be somewhat lessened, the quality is improved; and whereas it is worth but twelve pence an acre, generally, by experience we find it will be worth (when drayned) tenne shillings: But yet one degree farther; admit some part of it, in some yeares, were a firme and good inheritance, yielding as much profit before drayning as after; if it be

lawfull, where bankes, maintained against the Sea or Rivers, are likely to break, to raise new upon any mans firme and proper inheritance (that lies most convenient) for the safety of the rest; or if it be lawfull, when one end of a street is on fire, to pull downe houses, that the fire hath not yet seized on (and perhaps might never) for the safety of the rest, why (rather may it not be lawfull to drayne the Fennes (now yielding little or no profit) though against their wills, when as it much conduceth to their particular good (in that they are made usefull at all seasons of the yeare to plant, to sow corne or other uses) and many waies also to the Common-wealth; and likewise prevents a further overflowing of the waters, which (in all likelihood) would, in proceſſe of time, be, by these waters which now are, or lately have bin, upon the Levells before specified: For by auntient Records it appeares, as also, by the famous Monasteries, Abbies, Churches, and other goodly and great buildings, by the many sound roots of trees and other things found in the digging of some new draynes, that all these Fennes have bin firme and good ground heretofore; and (as M. *Camden* relates out of *William Malmesburies* History) a very Paradise, both in respect of the pleasantesse and exceeding great richnesse of the soile. But if these had not bin good grounds formerly (as questionlesse they have) the severall lawes of drayning made long since by Kings and Parliaments, and the execution of them committed to Commissioners of *Sewers* with an unlimited power, and the priviledges, that have bin bestowed on such who have spent their Labours this way (as those of *Romney* Marsh who are free from payment of Subsidies and have other freedomes) sufficiently demonstrate, there were plainly appearing great commodities and profits to be reaped, by the Common-wealth, out of drayning, or else, we may conclude them to be very idly instituted, and granted.

Thus farre I have brought examples from your own home; but if you please likewise to look on the honour and riches the Low-Country-men, and the Duke of *Florence* have gained by drayning and making rivers for transporting commodities too, and fro within their Countries (which you may more at large read in the fore-quoted author) you will find it to be so great that

147  
that nothing could have advanced it more, and if others have had so great gaines out of so bad grounds, what must the profits needs be to this Kingdome, which hath better and higher grounds, and a more convenient passage for venting of the waters.

I know not, nor I believe the most quick-sighted opposer can find, wherein I have raised the rates of any of the commodities in the particular I have given; but if you please to take but halfe thereof, and you shall find it to be neare two millions *per annum* (a great considerable summe, to be made, out of such a portion of land, and there, where almost nothing hath bin made formerly) besides the manufactures and the profit of the surrounded lands herein not mentioned.

But perhaps it may be objected that most parts of Fen grounds are unfit to be used either as arable or pasture, by reason of the many hassocky and moorish parts of them: and if they are made fit, they will not long continue so fruitfull.

*I answer.* That there doubtlesse many acres of such grounds; but I know none at all that cannot by industry soone be made very profitable, and remaine so for ever: following but the (commonly knowne) rules of husbandry: for if you cut the hassocks, plow the ground, and burne the hassocks, and the green soare, and sow it with any of the fore-mentioned seeds, it will three or foure yeares yield exceeding great crops, and then if it continue not in as good increase as formerly, turne it to pasture; and it will yield exceeding good grasse; this being the only and proper way.

To conclude, if the great losse, prejudice, and dishonour (under which this Kingdom long hath groaned) in the vast and almost inexpressible expence in buying forreigne commodities at a deere rate, when as it might have of its own and sell and transport to others, in daily decrease of moneys, and increase of poore people, if contrariewise, the great benefits, in the increase of the Kings revenue, victuall, brood of horses, cattle, and sheepe, cole and rape-seed, madder, flax, hemp, &c. if the transporting by water of these and other commodities from place to place within the Countrey (to the great advancement of trade as I have before shewed) and lastly if the

employment of so many thousand poore people, be duly considered, I doubt not of all well-willers, to this King and Kingdome, lending their best assistance to the accomplishing so good, so great, nay rather essentiall, designe, for the Commonwealth.

FINIS.



